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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY China

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DATE:

INFO. Up to 26 August 1941

SUBJECT Political Information: The Northeastern Youth League and the Changchun Student Manchuria

PAGES 4
SUPPLEMENT

- At the time of the Japanese surrender a group of young people in Changchun announced the formation of a Northeastern Youth League. The majority of this group consisted of Chinese graduates of Chienkuo University (建國大學), which was the highest educational institution in Manchukuo. It is now known as Changchun University. The avowed aim of the university under the Manchukuo regime was to build up the political knowledge for future government officers of the new state. Under the Manchukuo regime this university had sent out every year about 100 graduates, half of whom were Japanese and the other half Chinese. This university had three graduation exercises, so that of the total number of 300 graduates, about 150 were Chinese. All courses of this university took 6 years. Each year 200 youths were admitted to the university, but by the time of graduation the number of students in each year's class had reduced to half because of either personal or political reasons.
- This university provided considerable trouble to the Japanese authorities, particularly concerning the political ideas of the students. Many had studied Marxism and showed great sympathy towards Communism. Several times students were arrested by Japanese military police of the Kwantung Army and interned in concentration camps. The Kwantung Army was especially perturbed and had arrested many Japanese and Chinese youths [redacted] cited as an example a mass arrest of members of the Research Bureau of the Southern Manchurian Railroad Company in 1944.) The Chinese students and graduates developed an antipathy towards Japanese military might.
- At the time of the Japanese surrender those who had been made political prisoners regained their freedom and they became members of this Northeastern Youth League. In addition to this left wing group, a group joined whose sympathies were not with the Central Government of China or stood in a neutral position. Many of the young people, who, during the Manchukuo regime had fled to Chungking, came back again and joined this league. Thus, the members were divided politically as: (1) graduates or students of Chienkuo University who were more or less left wing in sympathies; (2) graduates or students either of Chienkuo University or of schools in Chungking who were right wing (Central Government) in sympathies;

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(3) graduates or students who were neutral.

The preparatory groundwork for this League had already been laid during the latter part of the Manchukuo regime. Announcement of its formation was made before the Soviet Army occupied Changchun. During the occupation of the Soviet Army until 14 April 1946, and that of the Chinese Communist Army until May 1946, this league had legal existence. During its legal existence it had an executive committee and issued a daily newspaper, the "Northeastern Youth" (東北青年). As soon as the Nationalist Army entered, the league was dissolved.

In the course of time this league as a conglomeration of groups with different political interests, view points, and sympathies split up internally more and more distinctly - either to the left wing or to the right. During this period its leadership was in the hands of the left wing group. Soon after the representative organization of the Central Government, the Northeastern Political Administration Bureau (東北行政公署), was established in liaison under the occupation of the Soviet Army, the right wing group began to show great disappointment in the Central Government. Their sympathy and interests with the Central Government gradually disappeared, and they became politically neutral. From the latter part of the Soviet Occupation onward, the political views and interests of groups within this league were divided into a left wing group and a neutral group.

c. With such conditions prevailing, the more positive and active left wing group grasped the leadership of the league. The most important personage in the league was WANG Ching-chao (王敬久), vice president of the league and leader of the left wing faction. The nominal president of the league was a neutral, but actual leadership belonged to WANG. When the Chinese Communist army came near the city of Changchun in April 1946, WANG escaped from Changchun to Kirin, which the Chinese Communist Army had occupied at the time. At the time of the Communist control of Changchun, WANG worked on the staff of the general control department. When the Communist Army was driven out of Changchun the majority of the left wing group went with it. Since members of the left wing group constituted more than half of all members of the league, the majority of league members had departed with the Communist army. In addition many persons who had fled from Manchuria to Chungking to join with the Central Government during the time of Japanese occupation and had returned to Manchuria to continue their education and political training at the end of the war, went with the Communist Army at this time. They considered the Central Government old fashioned in its manner of life, methods of administration, and ideology. Thus the remaining branch of the League was neutral.

Under the occupation of the Nationalists it was impossible to maintain this league, as previously, and the League was dissolved shortly after the Nationalist occupation. It is the general opinion that the group of young people who went away with the Chinese Communist Army constituted the most active and intelligent young people in Changchun.

d. As previously mentioned, the members of this League were not originally all of the same political viewpoint. Therefore, the original character of the League was not that of a political party, but that of a cultural development movement of the younger educated generation. The first aim of the League was to unify all the politically divided young people in Manchuria, and support and assist in the building of a free, unified, and modern state of China. From this point of view they had already begun training men to be dispatched as political educators to the various districts of Manchuria.

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In this sense, their intention was not the organization of an independent state of Manchuria. They viewed Manchuria as a part of a great new China. In their estimation Manchuria had neither the necessity nor the possibility of forming an independent state apart from China. Although once Manchuria was, under the CHANG Tso-lin and CHIANG Hsueh-ling regimes, semi-independent of the Central Government, such a state was not desirable. They considered the previous regimes as feudal in structure. Therefore, the intention of these educated young people was not a return to the old semi-independent regime, but to progress towards a modern unified China. They considered separation of Manchuria from North China as impossible. Thus the fundamental assumption of this League of young educated Manchurians was that political unity in China could and would be achieved by cooperation of the Central Government and the Communist Party.

However, when the Chinese Communist New 4th Army fought the Nationalist Army, it greatly astonished members of this League. As fighting increased between the two armies, a split to the left or to the right among members of this League became necessary. Under Soviet and Chinese Communist occupation, the League's political aims became left wing; under Nationalist occupation, although the League was officially dissolved, the remaining students are those who do not wish to collaborate with the Chinese Communists. These students now have reorganized the league in another form, but it preserves the spirit of the Northeastern Youth League. This league is called the Changchun Students League (长春大学生

10. The Chinese Central Government education authorities in August 1946 came to Changchun to complete foundation of a new university with six departments: law, literature, natural science, medicine, technical subjects, and agriculture. At the same time the students organized the Changchun Students League. The number of student members originally totalled 1300, but has recently increased until at the present time (August 26, 1946) there are approximately 1500. One reason for this is the escape of many students from Chinese Communist occupied territories to Changchun.
11. This league is merely a student organization, and its activities are limited to student affairs. It is not a political organization, but it does keep alive the spirit and political consciousness of the Northeastern Youth League. They have published a newspaper, but to date only one issue has come forth. The students are living under Nationalist occupation, and their education is partly financed by the Central Government. However, they are very critical of both the Central Government and the Chinese Communists.
12. All the students who were educated under the Japanese feel that they, regardless of political problems, learned from the Japanese the manner of modern life and thought - technically, economically, and socially. They believe that their ideas are in advance of the outmoded political and technical methods of the Nationalist government personnel, who appear entirely corrupt to these young people.

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13. The majority of the students acknowledge the political progress and lack of corruption of the Chinese Communists, but they do not believe that Communist theory has worked out in practice. They are especially concerned about the relationship of the Chinese Communists to Soviet Russia. Without exception these students hate Soviet Russia. Therefore they are now neutral or they are waiting to watch developments. They desire to be considered a "third party", although they are not actively engaged as a political party. It becomes more and more difficult for them to maintain a neutral position. They are becoming compelled to make clear whether their sympathies are right or left. However, their standard answer is that they are not sure which side is more justified.
14. Recently the Nationalist authorities have had considerable difficulty with these students. It has been recommended that the Chinese Central Education Bureau (Ministry of Education?) should send a distinguished educator to Changchun to serve as rector of Changchun University, because if these students cannot be successfully dealt with by the Central Government, they will be driven increasingly towards the Communist side.

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